

Arresting equipment loss with Wasp MobileAsset



Rapid growth makes assets disappear

Based in Sacramento, Calif., Paladin Private Security offers professional patrol services to businesses and residential areas. Paladin operates much like a police force, providing protection, surveillance and security responses to break-ins and other criminal activity. The company puts more than 55 patrol cars on the street and operates around the clock.

Paladin has experienced rapid growth, doubling its size in each of the last five years. On each shift, security force employees check out a kit of assets. This includes a marked security car, a laptop computer, a Taser stun gun, a video camera and keys to properties in their patrol area.

The company tightly screens its 135 employees before hiring them. Nevertheless, because officers spend time patrolling public areas, equipment is at risk of theft. Paladin began to see minor theft of assets, as well as inadvertent losses, as the company grew. Losses included several laptops valued at over \$2,000 each, a Taser weapon, and fuel cards used for filling patrol cars with gas. The lack of a reliable tracking system resulted in countless hours of investigative expense to resolve each of these issues.

“We were using an Excel spreadsheet to track our assets,” said Matt Carroll, a vice president and co-founder for Paladin. “This was far too difficult to manage our growing operation. Besides, the spreadsheet didn’t provide the immediate insight and reports we needed to rapidly take action.”

When items were misplaced, lost or used inappropriately, it sometimes took days or weeks for the company to realize these problems existed, Carroll said.

“Once we knew an asset was missing, we spent even more time trying to figure out who had it last,” Carroll said. “We wasted hours literally chasing our tails looking for missing items. In today’s environment, we could hardly afford to lose high-dollar items such as laptops any more.”



CASE STUDY AT A GLANCE...

▶ INDUSTRY

Private security

▶ COMPANY PROFILE

Paladin Private Security provides professional patrol services to businesses and residential neighborhoods in and around Sacramento, Calif. The company employs 135 and puts more than 55 patrol cars on the street daily.

▶ SITUATION

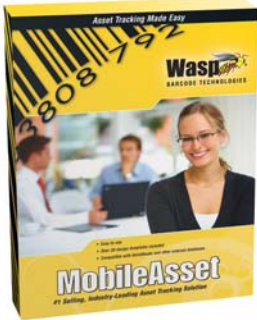
Each of Paladin’s officers was issued a computer, camera, dozens of access keys, Taser devices, and other important assets at the outset of each shift. The company relied on a manual spreadsheet to track these items, but found it impossible to accurately keep timely track of the assets. Critical equipment began to disappear, yet days or weeks passed before Paladin was aware of the problem.

▶ RESULTS

Wasp MobileAsset makes it easy for Paladin to quickly check assets in and out for each shift. The company can instantly determine if equipment is missing, saving \$36,000 annually in time spent searching for misplaced items. Paladin has also established a faster, more effective method for dispatching officers during emergencies – all with MobileAsset.

▶ PRODUCTS USED

- Wasp MobileAsset Pro
- Wasp WLS9500 Barcode Scanner



Tagging items at home base

Carroll knew the company needed a better way to track its assets. He began searching online for a barcode-based solution.

“At the outset, I found a lot of large vendors that sold to major retailers,” Carroll said. “These companies wanted \$15,000 or more, which was too high a price for our company. We wanted a solution to help us, but couldn’t afford the expense or complexity of some of the systems available”

After visiting a local technology retail store and the talking with the customer service team of Wasp Barcode Technologies, Carroll settled on Wasp MobileAsset. This tracking software enables companies to automate processes that, until now, have been undertaken manually – or not at all. MobileAsset provides unprecedented capabilities for capturing, managing, viewing, reporting and tracking company assets in small businesses, as well as departments of larger companies.

“MobileAsset costs about the same as the lost laptop we had to replace,” Carroll said. “If the solution could head off just one similar loss, I knew it would more than pay for itself in no time. Convincing my partners was a no-brainer, given the affordability and quick payback of purchasing MobileAsset”

With MobileAsset, Paladin created a foolproof method of checking out assets to security officers. Each officer is issued a barcoded ID badge. In addition, assets are tagged with unique barcodes.

When employees come to work, they attend a shift briefing where they are given specific tasks to complete. They then go to Paladin’s facilities room, where all assets are kept when not in use. Depending upon their tasks for the shift, officers check out a laptop, Taser, ammunition, video camera and specific access keys. The barcodes on these items, as well as the employee’s ID badges, are scanned. Specific patrol cars are assigned asset numbers and checked out as well. MobileAsset’s kitting function makes it simple to associate an entire “kit” of assets with a particular employee.

At the end of the shift, assets are returned and checked in with a quick barcode scan. This creates an immediate record of what was returned, as well as any missing items.



Locking up thousands in savings

With Wasp MobileAsset, Paladin is saving time, saving money, improving customer service and increasing workforce morale.

“Now, we are saving up to three hours a day, since we know exactly who possesses each of our assets,” Carroll said. For example, we used to spend time looking in the parking lot for a specific patrol car, when it was actually in the shop for repairs or already assigned and out on patrol.”

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Matt Carroll
Vice President and co-founder
of Paladin

By heading off this wasted and unproductive time spent searching for assets each day, Carroll estimates a savings of more than \$36,000 in time per year, which can instead be spent on higher-value tasks.

“Now, we won’t be losing expensive assets like computers and Tasers,” Carroll added. “We know who checked them out and when. And our employees know it as well. Saving the potential loss of just one computer has justified the investment.”



Interestingly, the system has actually improved staff morale. They now have confidence that they are issued the right assets, have the correct keys and now know the car they are assigned is really in the lot and not “missing” in the repair shop. Plus, everyone is functioning with the same information, Carroll said.

Making customers more secure

By placing barcodes on keys, Paladin also has improved its service for customers. Access keys for a particular property are issued to the patrolman covering that beat, and backup keys are given to officers on teams located nearby.

In the past, officers were reassigned to different beats, but might still carry backup keys from their prior locations. In case of an emergency, it was difficult to find which officers were carrying particular backup keys. What’s more, if backup officers had to be sent without keys, they put themselves in danger by jumping fences and taking other measures to access the property quickly.

Using MobileAsset, Paladin set up a numbering system for access keys. This makes it easier to turn in, reassign and check out access keys to the primary patrolman, as well as backup officers. Further, by having barcodes on the keys rather than actual addresses, the access cards carry a higher level of security as well.

If an alarm is tripped or Paladin receives a call for help, MobileAsset is accessed to immediately reveal which officers are carrying backup keys to the property in question. These officers are contacted and sent to the emergency location much faster than was previously possible. In addition, backup officers no longer place themselves at risk of physical injury from breaking into a locked property.

In the future, Carroll plans to leverage MobileAsset to track maintenance on patrol cars. This way, he can ensure the entire fleet is well-maintained, without paying for unneeded service.

“I love this system,” Carroll said. “It’s accurate, dependable and foolproof. I’m so pleased with the results, I’ve even called some of the other security companies in our area to recommend they buy MobileAsset for themselves.”

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